

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

What the invention claimed is:

1-18. (cancelled)

19. (new) An expanded PTFE article comprising:

a first plurality of fibrils interconnecting a first node with a second node, said first plurality of fibrils defining a first plurality of large pores therebetween;

a third node which is substantially smaller than said first and second nodes;

a second plurality of fibrils attaching said third node between said first and second nodes, said second plurality of fibrils defining therebetween a plurality of small pores; and

said second plurality of fibrils being substantially shorter than said first plurality of fibrils.

20. (new) The article of claim 19 wherein said first and second nodes are elongated and substantially parallel one to the other.

21. (new) The article of claim 19 wherein the article is tubular.

22. (new) The article of claim 21 wherein the article is reinforced by a helical member which is disposed on the outside surfaces of the article.

23. (new) The article of claim 22 wherein said helical member is constructed of FEP.

24. (new) The article of claim 19 wherein the small pores are about 2 to 15 microns and the large pores are in the range of about 20 to 50 microns.

25. (new) The article of claim 19 wherein the small pores are between 3 and 8 microns and the large pores are between 25 and 40 microns.

26. (new) The article of claim 19 wherein the small pores are between 4 and 8 microns and the large pores are between 25 and 40 microns.

27. (new) The article of claim 19 wherein the small pores are about 5 microns and the large pores are about 30 microns.

28. (new) An expanded PTFE article comprising:

a first plurality of fibrils interconnecting a first node with a second node, said first plurality of fibrils defining a first plurality of pores therebetween;

a third node which is substantially smaller than said first and second nodes;

a second plurality of fibrils attaching said third node between said first and second nodes, said second plurality of fibrils defining therebetween a second plurality of pores;
and

said second plurality of pores being discretely sized relative to said first plurality of pores.

29. (new) A method of making a PTFE article, comprising:

selecting a first resin having a high molecular weight;

selecting a second resin having a low molecular weight;

mixing said first and second resins together along with a lubricant to form a blend;

forming the blend into a billet;

extruding the billet into a shaped member;

expanding the shaped member at a first temperature, said first temperature being about the crystalline melt temperature of PTFE

providing said article as a medical implant device for use in blood-contact applications.

30. (new) The method of claim 29 wherein said extruding step comprises:
warming the billet to about 35°C and passing it through a die to form a PTFE tube.

31. (new) The method of claim 29 comprising:
setting said first temperature during said expanding step to be about 350°C.

32. (new) An expanded PTFE article for use as a tubular medical implant comprising:

a first plurality of fibrils interconnecting a first node with a second node, said first plurality of fibrils defining a first plurality of large pores therebetween;

a third node which is substantially smaller than said first and second nodes;

a second plurality of fibrils attaching said third node between said first and second nodes, said second plurality of fibrils defining therebetween a plurality of small pores;

said second plurality of fibrils being substantially shorter than said first plurality of fibrils; and

said article being adapted for use in blood-contact applications.